

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The influence of social media technology in political communication across the globe cannot be overemphasized. In recent times, social media are playing a dominant role in political mobilization, participation and electioneering campaigns in both developed and developing countries across the continent of the world. It is on record that since President Barrack Obama of the United State of America efficient use of the social media, there has been a growing use of new media technologies in facilitating political communication in contemporary times. Obama's victory is largely attributed to the massive deployment of social media by his campaign organization which provided inspiration to other world leaders. For instance, President Goodluck Jonathan and other political candidates equally used the social media to execute their political campaign during the 2011 presidential elections. Throughout history, political campaigns have evolved around the advancing technologies that are available to political candidates. As technology develops, politicians are able to deploy them to facilitate the dissemination of their manifestos (Emruli & Baca, 2011)

In Nigeria, like in most developing nations of the world, where politics is seen by a number of people as a dirty game which must be avoided, largely as a result of some undemocratic tendencies, deception, violence and uncertainties that characterize the

political system. But that seems to have changed. Today, election campaigns in Nigeria are increasingly becoming complex and robust. More and more people are getting involved and interested in the process, made possible by some agencies in the society. Media play significant role in the formation of public opinion by reflecting issues of the greatest concern to a particular society. With the increasing role of the media in shaping public opinion, it has become more commercialized on one side and has experienced more limitations and restrictions on the other. However, the emergence and proliferation of social media otherwise known as citizen media has reshaped political education, political campaign and mobilization in Nigeria. It offers platform for political debates, cyber activism, political campaign and political mobilization. In the present political dispensation, office holders and seekers, politicians now have and manage social media account such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.

In Nigeria, the 2011 general elections were the first litmus test of the use of social media by political parties, political candidates, and the civil society organizations. The election was historic in the sense that it was the first time ever that new media technologies like Facebook, Blogs, LinkedIn and other social networks facilitated political communication and participation in Nigeria (Dagona, Karick, & Abubakar, 2013). Thus, these new media technologies have redefined methods of political communication in contemporary times and thereby led to significant shift towards the utilization of these modern tools in the electoral process. This new paradigm shift has challenged previous methods used for political communication where television, radio and newspapers dominated coverage of political campaigns, and thus became the primary source of election-related information. However, today, the social media have become a major avenue where political parties and candidates connect with the electorate to share vital information about their policies, programmes and manifestos. Because of the ease, reach

and speed associated with the social media, it has become a tool revolutionizing the field of political communication globally.

With social media, persuading the public and influencing opinions have become more achievable and, yet, more uncontrollable. With the new social media, the old limiting factors – time, distance, nationality, and ideology – are gone. If public opinion can be influenced, so can societies. Content presented through social media does not have to have approval to be published, which is positive in the sense that it can contravene censorship and control. On the other hand, this freedom creates new issues for the governmental affairs area of public relations. Social media platforms have thus become autonomous participants in building and influencing democratic processes. Everyone can be engaged in the decision-making process.

It is upon this paradigm shift in the communication industry that this study is based on as it seeks to evaluate social media political campaigns and its influence on the choice of a presidential candidate amongst youths in Lagos Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

It has consistently been reported and argued that people who are more exposed to news media have a greater probability of being more engaged in the civic and political affairs of a given people. Okoro and Adibe (2013) observe that ‘the use of social media as a formidable force for social engineering and political electioneering has continued to grow. The technology is participatory, interactive and cost-effective. This has made it the medium of the moment as far as political communication and participation are concerned.’

In their study, Okoro and Adibe (2013) found that social media was used for political campaigning and participation in Nigeria during the 2011 general elections, noting that vital lessons could be learnt from the social media use experiment during the 2011

general elections in Nigeria, among which is that social media offer participatory democracy at its best, the technology promotes transparency and greater accuracy in the political process, they facilitate speedy release of election results, among others. In an era when the public's time and attention is increasingly directed toward platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and online publication, and with more than half of Nigerian population being youths, this study is seeking to evaluate social media political campaigns and its influence on the choice of a presidential candidate amongst Nigerian youths. The researcher is in strong belief that a study of this nature is necessary to facilitate understanding of the growing importance of the social media in Nigerian political firmament.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The aim of the study is to basically evaluate social media political campaigns and its influence on the choice of a presidential candidate amongst youths in Lagos Nigeria.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Assess the influence of social media political campaigns on the choice of presidential candidate amongst youth's in Lagos state.
2. Find out whether the popularity of the presidential candidates during presidential election has any significant relationship with their use of social media as a campaign tool.
3. Determine the influence of social media political campaign on the voting pattern of the Youths in Lagos.

1.4 Research Questions

1. To what extent does social media political campaign influences the choice of presidential candidate amongst youths in Lagos?

2. Does the popularity of presidential candidates during presidential election has any significant relationship with their use of social media as a campaign tool?
3. To what extent does social media political campaign influences the voting pattern of youths in Lagos?

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study is focused on assessing the influence of social media political campaigns on the choice of presidential candidate amongst youths in Lagos state; finding out whether the popularity of the presidential candidates during presidential election has any significant relationship with their use of social media as a campaign tool and finally, determine the influence of social media political campaign on the voting pattern of the Youths in Lagos.

1.6 Significance of the Study

With Social media being a relatively advanced and ever-dynamic means of communication in Nigeria, the study will provide additional knowledge on the subject matter. It is hoped that the study in its practical value will educate politicians and political parties on the importance of social media in contemporary political communication, since social media tools are yet to be fully explored for political campaigns in Nigeria.

Also, this study will provide insights to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and civil society organizations in designing programmes that would promote the use of new media technologies in the political process in Nigeria. Lastly, the findings of this study would serve as a springboard for future research in the field of political science and communication..

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

- **Social Media:** Social media is the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration. Social media are new information channels and technology that use a form of communication that involves interactive and user-generated content, and relationships between people are created and maintained.
- **Presidential Candidate:** This is the person seeking or being considered for the position of the president of a nation. Presidential candidates in this study are political candidates aspiring to occupy the seat of the president of the federal republic of Nigeria after the 2023 General Election.
- **Political Campaign:** A political campaign is a coordinated effort by a political candidate, political party, or interest group to win an election or achieve a specific policy objective. This typically involves developing and implementing strategies and tactics to reach voters, mobilize supporters, and persuade undecided voters, and may include activities such as canvassing, direct reach out, advertising, and public speaking. The ultimate goal of a political campaign is to gain support and win votes.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Social Media

The social media phenomenon has attracted many conceptual underpinnings from different disciplines. However, on a general note, social media, according to Suomen Toivo–Think Tank (2012), are new information network and information technology using a form of interactive communication skills, where users produce the content of information and

interpersonal relationships are established and maintained in the process. In the same vein, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), defines social media as a group of Internet-based application that are built upon the ideology and technology of web 2.0 and allows the generation and exchange of its content. A typical social media services could be content sharing, web communities, or an Internet forum (Sanastokeskus, 2010). Okoro and Adibe (2013) observe that the social media are the Internet-based tools and services that allow users to engage with each other, generate content, distribute, and search for information online.

In other words, the social media are interactive web-based media platforms that offer citizens opportunity and place to connect, share opinions, experiences, views, contacts, knowledge, expertise, as well as other things like job and career tips. They belong to a new genre of media that focuses on social networking allowing users to express themselves, interact with friends and share information with greater freedom as well as publish their views on issues on the World Wide Web.

From the works of Eysenbach (2008) and Suomen Toivo-Think Tank (2012) at least five major features of the social media are easy to identify. They include social networking and social interaction, participation, the use of different providers (e.g. search engines, blog spaces, etc.), openness and collaboration (between both users and user groups). These features are linked to the six classifications of social media. There classifications are: Social Networks (Facebook, Google+, Myspace, LinkedIn), Media Products Community (Youtube, Flickr, Slideshare), Blog Services (wordpress, blogger, Twitter), Information Community (Wikipedia and Wikispaces), which is also referred to as Collaborative Project (Policy and Legal Advocacy Centre, 2012), Virtual Community also called Virtual Game Worlds PLAC (Second Life and World of Warcraft), Link Sharing Services (Digg and Diigo).

From the classification above, it can be deduced that the social media is a part of the whole body of activities consisting of Internet communication and online interactions (Suomen Toivo- Think Tank, 2012).

As such, on the social media, several things are communicated: songs, videos, tweets, comic, blogs, stories and others. Such information is most commonly communicated on blogs, Twitter, Wiki, Youtube and Facebook. Apart from these websites, these applications are even more accessible to users on smartphones, androids and tablets. The BBM is an example, with BBM channels, where news and other information are created, broadcasted, and even modified. There is also WhatsApp application that facilitates the formulation and dissemination of information.

All the social media sites and applications have interactive options that facilitate sharing, broadcasting and rebroadcasting of information. Unlike the Television, Radio, and Newspaper, social media users are not passive; rather they are active in the formation and exchange of information (Sweetser and Laricsy, 2008). Information that emanated from a member of a particular forum might become topical and even go viral. In social media, the gate keeping role of traditional media is eliminated. Information that emanated from a member of the forum might become topical and even spread beyond where it was first discussed. Chatora (2012) observes that it is this interactive or collaborative nature of these tools that makes them social.

2.1.2 Political Campaign

A political campaign is a coordinated effort by a political candidate, political party, or interest group to win an election or achieve a specific policy objective. This typically involves developing and implementing strategies and tactics to reach voters, mobilize

supporters, and persuade undecided voters, and may include activities such as canvassing, direct reach out, advertising, and public speaking. The ultimate goal of a political campaign is to gain support and win votes.

Minimally defined, a campaign is the period right before citizens make a real political choice. This common knowledge typically heightens citizens' attention to politics in direct relation to the proximity of the event. Concomitantly, campaign activity is more likely to register on voters' minds as Election Day draws near. Thus there is an interaction between campaign effort and the approaching "deadline" of Election Day. Evidence of greater salience for voters could manifest itself in, for example, media attentiveness, campaign interest, political discussion, knowledge about candidates, and strength of vote intention.

There are two conceptually distinct, but empirically linked, ways of looking at a campaign. One focuses on institutional or quasi-institutional conditions. The second considers campaigns as periods of uncommon intensity in the political order, which can either broaden the period identified as a campaign or narrow it.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Uses and Gratifications Theory

According to Baran and Davis (2003), the origin of the theory is often credited to Herta Herzog. They went further to establish that Herzog's article entitled "motivations and gratifications of daily serial listeners" was the first published research to provide an in-depth examination of media gratifications. Sweetser and Kaid (2008) opined that the theory has been more recently used to determine the gratifications of entertainment media. The theory also has a long history of investigating political information seeking motivations. Blumer and McQuail (1969) found that gratifications sought from watching political broadcasts clustered into three constructs; political reason such as reinforcement or vote guidance; surveillance for

keeping up with the issues; and excitement such as seeing which political party would win.

With the development of the internet and its subsequent deployment for the dissemination of political information, researchers have applied the uses and gratifications perspective to online political information seeking.

Kaye and Johnson (2002) examined gratification for seeking political information online and found that primary motivations to be guidance, information seeking and surveillance, entertainment and social utility. These scholars also link media use political attitudes and behaviours. To buttress this assertion, Kaye and Johnson (2002) in a study reported that higher levels of self-efficacy are associated with information seeking and surveillance, and higher interest in politics is correlated with accessing political information online for social utility and information seeking surveillance.

The theory according to Anaeto, Onabanjo and Osifeso (2008) is concerned with what people do with the media instead of what the media do to people. The major thrust of the theory subscribes to the assumption that consumers of mass media content influence the effect of the mass media on them. Hence media consumers are not passive but active in determining what they use the media for. Folarin (2005) observed that mass media audience have some certain needs that are dear to them that is why they are exposed to, attend to, and retain media messages because of the perceived gratification derivable from such messages. The theory is relevant to this study because users of social media feel that the medium will satisfy their curiosity and meet their information need, and thus make them active participants in the political communication process which will in turn influence their basic choices of political candidate.

2.2.2 Technological Determinism Theory

The concept "technological determinism theory" explains the setting of this study. The theory which was propounded by Marshall McLuhan (1964), a Canadian communication scholar, who observed new media technologies in communication, would soon determine social changes, turning the world into a global village. He believes socio-political, economic and cultural changes are inevitably based on development and diffusion of technology. McLuhan argued technology undoubtedly causes specific changes on how people think, how society is structured and the form of culture created. This theory portends that, given the emergence of Internet and its adoption and relevance in mobilizing people for political activities, there is bound to be an impact on the electoral process and overall political environment.

Communication is the basic tenet of technological determinism theory. The theory seeks to explain social and historical phenomena in terms of the principal determining factor (technology). The theory states that communication technologies in general are the prime causes of changes in society. Reinforcing this position, Chandler (1995) affirms that technological determinists interpret technology in general and communication technologies in particular as the basis of society in the past, present and even the future. However, as far as communication is concerned, we are increasingly dealing with a world without frontiers. The amazing technological revolution, which McLuhan was so fascinated about, has not stood still, same goes to the people that handle the process and what they do (Oliver, 2011).

According to Baran (2004), technological determinism is the thinking in some quarters that it is machine and their development that drive historical, economic political and cultural changes. There is however, a perspective to technological determinism, which sees technology as more neutral and claim the way people use it is what gives it significance. This perspective that accepts technology as one of the many factors that shape historical,

economic, political and cultural changes is ultimately determined by how much power it is given by the people and cultures that use it (Baran, 2004).

2.3 Empirical Review

According to Clark and Aufderheide (2009), social media are increasingly becoming popular among politicians and their organizations as a means to disseminate political messages, learn about the interest and needs of constituents and the broader public, raise funds, and build networks of support. Lending credence to this assertion, Hong and Nadler (2011) observed that in a very short space of time, politicians in modern democracies across the world have eagerly adopted social media for engaging their constituents, entering into direct dialogs with citizens and enabling vivid political discussions. Raiz (2010) equally posited that in the past five years, elections conducted in Africa witnessed a massive use of social media during electioneering campaigns by key political figures, political parties and civil society organizations. This development has made researchers in recent times to investigate the influence of social media in the sphere of political communication. This perhaps explains why researchers like Graber and Smith (2005) contend that a great deal of research efforts has gone into assessments of the role played by new media in providing information to those citizens and politicians alike who need to fulfil their civic duties.

A number of studies have been conducted by scholars on the growing influence of social media during political campaigns, for instance, a study by Kushin and Yamamoto (2010) attempted to determine whether social media usage actually impact on political self-efficacy and involvement of electorates during the 2008 US presidential election. Their findings show that there was a drastic rise in the use of social media by political candidates as well as the electorates. According to them, 27% of young people reported obtaining political information

from the social media. Corroborating their finding, Owen, Soule, Nairne, Chalif, House., and Davidson, (2011) remarked that the 2008 US election marked a breakthrough year for political use of new media and social networks specifically. They further opined that social networking websites played an especially innovative and important role in the protracted primary race between Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton. Obama subsequent victory at the main election was largely attributed to his massive use of the social media during the electioneering campaigns.

Likewise, the 2011 general elections provided political aspirants the avenue to use social media tools to connect with voters and constituents for the first time in Nigeria political arena; for instance, Ekine (2010) reported that President Goodluck Jonathan had nearly 3000,000 followers on his Facebook account following the step of president Barrack Obama of the United State. Corroborating further, Okoro and Nwafor (2013) conducted a study titled “social and political participation in Nigeria during the 2011 general elections: The lapses and the lessons”. The objectives of the study were to find out the role played by social media in the political participation of Nigerians, observe the lapses in the use of social media during the elections, and the lessons learnt from social media use in the course of the election. The findings of their study revealed that 93% of the respondents attested to the fact they used social media for political participation during the election. Respondents also said they used different social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, SMS calls, and YouTube to participate during the election. The study also identified some lapses in the cause of the use of social media in the electioneering process. Furthermore, civil society groups and activists were not left out in the political process. Groups such as “Safe Nigeria Group”, “Vote or Quench”, “Enough is Enough”, “Light up Nigeria” and “Sleeves up Nigeria”, and “Reclaim Naija”, among others were formed in order to mobilize and create awareness for mass participation in the election.

Since these groups were mostly dominated by young people, they heavily employed social media to initiate and put up a youth presidential debates, and share intelligence to push forward the campaign for creditable elections on social media platform.

In doing this, the mainstream media struck a working relationship with social media platforms that enhance both citizen's participation and professional journalist practices. Journalists from various media organizations in the country engaged with citizens on Facebook and citizen's contributions informed the journalist's questions during interview with political institution such as INEC. For instance, there was convergence of different media of communication like the print media and television and social networking sites to monitor, cover and report election proceedings from different polling stations. In regard to this, Channels Television features regular live coverage through their websites, ipad, iphone, and other devices. During the elections, the organization established a four-person social media team, with one each handling the website, Twitter, Facebook, and the fourth feeding information from the newsroom to the other three members of the team (Asuni & Farris, 2011). This therefore facilitated simultaneous transition on Television, Twitter, and Facebook respectively. In the same vein, Thisday Newspaper and Tell magazine were able to used Facebook to update people with proceedings of the election as well as provided the avenue for members of the public to post their comments on Facebook.

2.3.1 Social Media, Political Campaign and Participation

Since the emergence of the first social media networks some two decades ago, social media has continued to evolve and offer consumers around the world new and meaningful ways to engage with the people, events and brands. Now, social media has become an integral part of our daily lives. Social networking is now truly a global phenomenon. Abubakar (2011) notes

that the coming of social media in the last few years is fast changing the situation as we now have online platforms that serve as a new “political capital” where people now resort to and participate in political discourse. The author citing Kweon and Kim (2011) maintains that social media have become a main source of personal orientation, anonymous interactivities and social community on variety of issues that involve politics and political discourse.

Mayfield (2010) attribute the social media capacity of boosting participation to its connectedness and textual/audio-visual characteristics appeal.

Before the advent of the new media, political campaigns and other electioneering activities blossomed in the traditional media. Olajide (2002) cited in Onwukwe (2011) notes that prior to this period, political rallies, personal contacts and speeches were popularly used for mobilising electorates’ support on political issues, and that this was greatly propelled by the mass media force. At that time, political participation was more risky, expensive and required a great deal of investments from individuals willing to engage in political activities. The process was quite demanding as far as time, money, knowledge and information are concerned. The endemic poverty in Africa prevented citizens from attending political meetings, and sometimes, from travelling to exercise their voting rights. In the past, there seemed to be apathy among Nigerians when it comes to political involvement. The INEC noted that Nigerians’ participation during the general election in the 2011 was low. Only 35% of the 70 million registered voters took part in the election. The Friedrich Elbert Stifting Foundation conducted a research on the 2011 election and identified lack of transparent elections, election violence and politicians’ noncommittal to their campaign promises as major reasons for voters’ apathy in the country (Odebode, 2011). Collin (2011) highlights the benefits of the social media to include media literacy, education, creativity, individual identity and self expression, strengthening of interpersonal relationships, sense of belongingness, and collective identity, strengthening and building of communities, civic engagement and

2.3.2 The Challenges in the Use of Social Media as a Political Platform in Nigeria

In spite of the numerous advantages of social media advantages in fostering politics, democracy and good governance in Nigeria, they equally have their challenges. No doubt, social media platforms can be misused in disseminating unfiltered/unverified information, hate messages and rumours which are inimical to strengthening democracy. The increasing use of social media and other online tools has indeed led to greater privacy, monitoring as well as regulation challenges (Ekwe, et al, 2011 as cited in Ajayi & Adesote, 2015).

For instance, a viral video of immoral conduct or lurid sex photo can instantly infect a political campaign or career, dooming it to untimely termination. Anonymity of sources makes it difficult for strict regulation, monitoring and prosecution of illicit acts. This makes it a vulnerable instrument for perpetuating fraudulent acts. It also promotes piracy. This is partly because the question of copyright and intellectual property are more complex and difficult to define and even more difficult to regulate online.

Similarly, images and sounds can be digitally manipulated, so truth and reality are difficult to ascertain. Social media is addictive in nature, making work/life balance hard to achieve. With the new technologies, users get more than they bargain for because of their information overload and social network overload. Kidafa, Odoemelam and Elechi (2011) observe that “regulating traditional media in the face of issues like obscenity, copyright, right to privacy, was upheaval (sic), but have become more difficult with the emergence of social media”. How to effect censorship without being seen as abridging rights and derailing democracy is a dilemma for the politicians and government officials. It is also important to reflect on the ways that ICTs are actually being used to counter democratic processes, because so doing can help develop understanding of the policies that need to be in place to resist such actions.

There is increasing understanding that it is not just companies and governments that can use social media for negative purposes, and that individuals and small groups could use it for bullying, digital, monstering, or violent actions, not to talk of fraudulent or criminal activities (419 in local parlance). Another challenge is the issue of relatively low penetration and access in the country. Writing on penetration of new media in Africa, Osuala in Adibe and Odoemelam (2011) notes that: The diffusion of new technologies in Africa is still at a snail speed such that the gap between the information rich developed countries and African countries continue to increase everyday.

Consequently, most African countries have not been able to reap the abundant benefits of the global information revolution in many areas of life.

The picture painted above is still largely unchanged. Again, in many parts of Nigeria where social media (such as, twitter, facebook) is in use, it is still mainly an urban affair and mostly elitist. This development must have informed the Nigerian government's promotion of e-government through the establishment of a Ministry of Communication Technology to drive this initiative by deploying ICT to enhance transparency, efficiency, productivity and citizen engagement (Aginam, 2014).

2.3.3 The Role of Social Media in Political Campaigning and Mobilization for Electoral Participation

The new media technologies have arguably enhanced the communication process in a wide range of human endeavours and the political environment no doubt is experiencing a great deal of the impact of new media phenomenon (Nwabueze & Ezebuenyi, 2012). However, the growing recognition and utilization of social media and their application in the political

process underscore the role which social media have assumed in the world today. In Nigeria for instance, the unwholesome reliance on godfatherism is gradually giving way to online tactical crafting and packaging of persuasive messages by campaign managers and political parties with an aim to consciously persuade Nigerian voters to vote in their candidates (Ezebuenyi & Ejezieh, 2012).

According to Dunu & Oraka (2004), the tremendous fact of the new media technologies has definitely furnished the communication industry with revolutionary positive changes unprecedented. According to them, Nigeria, like other countries of the world, has also benefited in terms of improved technology output, variety offerings, improved resources and quality output occasioned by the new media revolution. This art and science of information management through the new media seem to be gaining more grounds in our political landscape.

Thus, political advertising is today carried online (Kur & Melladu, 2007). The election campaign that saw Barack Obama become the President of the United States of America (USA) in 2008/ 2012 was characterized by effective and efficient information management ability interfacing the deployment of the new media technologies by his ability to use online platforms to attract the electorate commonly known as friends of Obama with the slogan "change is possible". Following the same trend, President Goodluck Jonathan also adopted an online information management skills in his 2011 presidential election campaigns and actually become the first in Nigeria to use such strategy that has increasingly made an inroad into our electoral process and in the overall political environment (Ezebuenyi & Ejezieh, 2012). Social media help large groups to gather in a short amount of time. They also provide a platform for people to express their solidarity both within the country and with others in the region and beyond. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter are being credited with helping to propel the Arab Revolution (Hunter, 2011). Still harping on the role of the new media, Ikem

(2011) argues: The place of social media (new media) to rally political support is no longer in doubt. To advance the conversation and mobilize political support, social media have become a crucial political campaign tool. Facebook, Twitter and other social networks reinforce political messages and build online and offline support that will help drive interesting debates about any politician and/or political party. In fact, the social media provide a potential to stream and broadcast real live political rallies and party conventions online, in such a way that supporters, who cannot participate physically can be involved from a distance effortlessly.

Commenting further, Ikem (2011) observes that whereas the dependence of the politicians on traditional media for political campaigns will certainly be noticeable and cannot be completely discarded, modern trends of the new media seem to be eroding the gains of the traditional media. In a changing world, it is impossible to advance democratic change and development with old tools. Today, leaders need to understand the role of changing communication technology for politics and society. This is the use of the new media in the field of governance and political development to increase citizens' participation in the political process.

Furthermore, through the diffusion of the Internet, new media have been variously involved in the restructuring of socio-cultural economic and political relationships and environments all over the world (Nkala, 2012). This has been evident in the pervasiveness of user-generated content and the ways it is used to support social networking. The diffusion of this development is already revolutionizing all facets of human endeavour and the political process is not left out (Nwabueze, 2005). With the rise of social networking technologies, isolated actors with common aims increasingly use online tools to connect, share, discuss and organize.

Impoverished Hierarchies of Participatory Influence in the April 6th Youth Movement

Facebook Group, seeks to better understand the mechanisms of influence and participatory structures of a single, open political Facebook group that has successfully organized offline action without relying on a defined hierarchical structure. The April 6th Youth Movement Facebook Group has over 80,000 members and no leader, yet it is still capable of acting in concert with the intent of reforming the repressive offline political sphere in Egypt (Saharan reporters, 2011).

Exploring quantitative data collected in 2009/2010 by Alexandra Dunn to investigate the role of social media on the Egyptian crisis, the analysis found a small group of highly active users that directed discussion on the Facebook wall - the central hub of organizational activity (Saharan reporters, 2011). The volume of participation increased significantly on sample days of heightened offline political activity and when the top participants were prevented from contributing to the wall on these days (because of demonstration, detention or arrest), another small subset of users filled the leadership vacuum. These findings indicate that there is the possibility for Facebook and other Social Networking Services (SNSs) to act not only as complementary spaces for political discussion or campaigning, but as platforms for organizational structures that exist independently of any party and act to successfully secure collectively defined goals (Munson & Resnick, 2011; Baumgartner & Morris, 2010; Kushin & Kitchener, 2009; Utz, 2009; Farrell & Drezner, 2008; Schmidt, 2007)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study used survey research design, employing quantitative approach for the purposes of data collection. Onwukwe (2011) notes that, "survey research is concerned with the collection of data for the purpose of describing and interpreting a certain condition, practice, beliefs, attitudes, etc," purpose being to describe systematically the facts, qualities or characteristics of a given population, events, or areas of interest concerning the problem under investigation (Okoro and Adibe, 2011).

3.2 Population of the Study

The Nigeria National Youth Policy (2001) defines youths as all young persons between the ages of 18 and 35 years who are citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and legally authorized to vote. For the purposes of the study, the researcher adopted the age bracket of 18 to 35. The population of Lagos state is estimated at approximately 25 million of which 60 per

cent are young people between the ages of 15 and 35. As at 2022, the population of youths in Lagos, stands at approximately 10 million (Kehinde, 2022). The choice of this segment of the population was also informed by the fact that in order to use social media, one requires some certain degree of literacy, and majority of the youths boast of this (Okoro and Adibe, 2013).

3.3 Sample Size

The sample size was calculated using Guilford and Flruchter formula for estimating sample size as presented below:

$$\frac{N}{1+Q^2N}$$

Where: N = Population size = 10,000,000

Q = alpha = 0.05

$$\frac{10,000,000}{1+0.05^2(10,000,000)}$$

= 399.98

Approximately: 400

Sample size = 400

3.4 Sampling Technique

Sampling works on the premise that a given population is too large for any researcher to realistically observe all the elements therein (Nwodu, 2006). The simple random sampling technique was used in the administration of questionnaires to respondents in Lagos state, Nigeria.

3.5 Research Instrument

A questionnaire, was designed as the research instrument with nineteen items, each made to evaluate social media political campaigns and it's influence on the choice of a presidential candidate amongst youths in Lagos Nigeria.

3.6 Validity of Research Instrument

The questionnaire for this study was validated by the project supervisor who went through it and made some corrections before it was administered.

3.7 Reliability of Research Instrument

Reliability is the ability of a particular measuring instrument to yield similar result when applied to the same situation at different time (Smart, 2008). The researcher administered some copies of questionnaires to sample/respondents. The respondents answered the questionnaires to the best of their knowledge without being bias. The respondents used for the pretest were youths in Lagos State and the pretest was carried out twice with the same number of persons at the different time and locations and the same result was obtained, thus justified the reliability of the instrument.

3.8 Data Gathering Procedure

In collecting data for the study, primary and secondary sources were used. For the primary data, the questionnaire was used as an instrument to elicit response from the respondents.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The data obtained from the study were analysed quantitatively.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Presentation of Results'

4.2 Analysis according to Research Questions

4.3 Discussion of Findings

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

5.2 Conclusion